

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MAY 7, 1905.—Copyright, 1905, by The Sun Printing and Publishing Association.

FAULTS OF STENOGRAPHERS.

BAD SPELLING A COMMON CAUSE OF COMPLAINT.

Graduates of Grammar Schools, and Even High Schools, Among the Offenders—Lack of Perseverance Another Common Failing—Employers Blamed, Too.

The teachers in schools of stenography differ on the question whether young girls, spinsters or widows make the best stenographers and typewriters, and they also differ on various other questions. But on one point they are of one mind: The spelling of a large proportion of pupils is appallingly poor.

At one school the proprietor expressed the opinion that not 20 per cent. of the applicants could be called good spellers. She added that the proportion of poor spellers was much larger now than it was ten years ago.

"Most of the younger applicants are graduates of the public school," she said. "We have even had high school pupils come around here who didn't know how to spell."

"For this reason every school of stenography includes a course in spelling—throws it in free along with the stenography lessons. In order to promote interest in spelling we give three prizes every term."

"No, there are no catch words, no out of the way words introduced into the lessons. It is just the ordinary little every-day words in common use that they can't spell."

"At one of the high priced schools, the manager said that during the last school year he turned away about fifty applicants because they were utterly unfitted for the work."

"Some applicants," he said, "have really no vocabulary at all or not much larger than that of the average bright child of six or eight, and their manner and pronunciation show a woful lack of fitness for the work they fancy they want to take up."

"I have no hesitation in saying that, were I to advertise for a stenographer to-morrow, out of a line of applicants reaching from this office down to the front door, I might not find one who could turn out a letter from 'Dear Sir' to 'Yours respectfully,' without making half a dozen errors of one sort and another, including spelling," was the statement of the proprietor of a school where stenography is a main feature.

At this school no promises of turning out prodigies in a given number of weeks or of supplying paying employment at the end of one term are made. The pupils represent a high average of intelligence, and also of application and perseverance. Yet the head of the school says that few of them are good spellers. What is more, he doesn't believe that spelling can be taught successfully along with stenography simply by furnishing a list of words for pupils to familiarize themselves with.

"I have been a stenographer and teacher for more than thirty years," said he, "and am so convinced of the hopelessness of teaching spelling to a young woman or young man who has been graduated from a public school without learning to spell that I never attempt it here after the usual cut and dried fashion."

"My plan is to mark misspelled words and make pupils hunt them up in the dictionary at once. If the same mistake occurs several times the chances are the dictator will never spell the word correctly."

"But poor spelling is only one of the difficulties stenography teachers run up against. For instance opening a huge scrapbook here are between four and five thousand typewritten business letters which I have secured in various ways from time to time from different merchants, manufacturers and professional men, representing hundreds of industries and nearly all the professions, and which I use in giving dictations to my pupils."

"Every letter was got out by a paid stenographer. Nevertheless, I can count on my fingers those which do not contain some fool error. Astonishing, isn't it?"

"There are two principal reasons why the stock of stenographers now in the market is so poor: First, lack of decent schooling and lack of application and perseverance."

"There is no other city in the world which offers such free educational advantages as New York. Therefore it never ceases to surprise me that grammar school and even high school pupils who are themselves here should know so little of spelling and grammatical construction."

"Then as to the other point. I am absolutely amazed at the coolness with which a young woman will present herself every now and then and tell me that she expects to learn a profession, and then I order her to go to school and then I am pretty sure to get this reply:

"But there are schools which undertake to teach stenography in three months."

"A student of one of these schools has a poor chance of learning her profession at all for the reason that she shows at the start a dislike to study, to apply herself. Pains-taking applications to her, and the grades are qualities absolutely necessary to the making of a good stenographer."

"Young girls, I find, are apt to learn more readily than older persons, but they are not so much in demand for good office positions as older women."

"Last winter, I remember, I met the demand of a broker of my acquaintance for a high speed stenographer by sending a young girl of sixteen to apply for the place. She looked even younger because she wore her hair in a pigtail and dresses to the tops of her shoes. Nevertheless, she was one of the most capable stenographers on my list."

"But when the broker saw her all he said was, 'Run home, little girl, and play in the mud some more, after which he called her up on the phone and reminded what I meant by sending him a kid from the nursery to do his work."

"The same day I sent for the girl's mother and as a result of this the girl appeared the next morning with her hair on the top of her head and wearing a gown which was quite suitable for a woman of fifty. I scarcely knew her, and I ordered her to get even with the broker I sent her down again to apply for the same place."

"The broker, as I expected, failed to recognize the girl, and reminded what I meant by sending him a kid from the nursery to do his work."

"At one of the get-her-quick schools, where 500 pupils—90 per cent. of whom are women—take lessons in stenography every day, the proprietor, who himself radiates a get-up-and-get-it atmosphere most exhilarating to applicants, says that almost every student who will apply herself every minute of the three hours which represent either a morning, an afternoon or an evening session, for five days every week and who will concentrate her attention thoroughly on the work in hand, will accomplish wonders and may become self-supporting in three months. He ad-

mits, however, that few pupils do this and that one of the highest handicaps he has to deal with is the evidence of lack of schooling in most of the candidates who apply.

"I have no desire to find fault with our public schools," said he, "but I must say that in my opinion the New York schools do not pay enough attention to spelling and grammar. In my experience graduates of the public schools were never so poorly equipped in these essentials as they are to-day."

"Many of my students go to night school to try and make up their deficiencies and besides that we give here lessons in spelling and in practical grammar—such as teaching the proper use of 'is' and 'are,' which a lot of students don't seem to know. Therefore when one finishes a three months course here or she is bound to have a vocabulary of 3,500 words anyway, for the reason that fifty words are furnished to a lesson, and there are seventy lessons."

"Occasionally letters are dictated ungrammatically, and it is not rectified by him by the typewriter and explained by a teacher when the typewritten copy is sent in."

"Perhaps the most significant statement of all in regard to the difficulty of getting capable stenographers came from the manager of a typewriting concern in lower Broadway which furnishes stenographers with places free of charge provided they pass a certain examination."

"Two-thirds of the applicants who take the examination fall down," said the manager.

"Is the test unusually severe?"

"Not at all. It consists of three different dictations of 100 words a minute, which must be turned out properly spelled and punctuated and neatly and clearly typewritten. That is all."

"To my mind, though, the chief blame for the low grade of work turned out by the majority of the stenographers now drifting in and out of the New York offices lies at the doors of the business men who hire stenographers. Dozens, yes, hundreds of them are willing to pay \$4 a week and \$5 a week to their stenographer, knowing as they must that only the most inefficient would accept such wages. In return, of course, they may not expect much."

"The fact that such places may be had encourages students who are not anywhere near the diploma stage to leave school and earn a few dollars a week. With few exceptions, though, they stay right on at the bottom."

"The other day a business man called me up and asked if I had a stenographer to send along in a hurry. I told him I had and that he would have to wait a week."

"I don't want to pay more than eight," he shouted back.

"Well, I have nothing of that sort here," I answered, and hung up the receiver.

"A few days later he called me up again to let me know that by advertising he had got a stenographer for \$8 a week."

"Now will you deign to deign to deign that that stenographer has no diploma—certainly not one worth the paper it is written on, that she studied only a few weeks and that her employer will be long before long around lamenting and deploring the difficulty of getting a good stenographer."

"The enlightenment of any who may be thinking of learning stenography in a hurry here is a table of attendance furnished by the manager of one of the best schools in the city. The table shows that out of a class of seventy-two pupils the one who reached a standard of speed, accuracy and neatness warranting a diploma, one student only made the record in twelve weeks. Two other students reached it in fourteen weeks. All three were proficient in English, quick to think and had unusual manual dexterity."

"The others in the class, who were more or less hampered by a small vocabulary and a lack of application, took the way from nineteen to forty-nine weeks to reach graduation—six requiring thirty-two weeks, five, thirty-seven weeks; five, forty weeks, and one, fifty weeks."

"In each case the diploma signified a speed of only 100 words a minute."

QUEEN'S UNIQUE POSITION.

For Business Purposes Alexandra Is Not a Married Woman.

Great interest was aroused recently by the circumstances that in a grave national crisis, when the King was for the moment inaccessible, the Ministers of state were summoned to the presence of Queen Alexandra for consultation, with, as was generally understood, most satisfactory results.

The Queen's position is a unique one. She is the only woman in Great Britain who does not come under the scope of the Married Women's Property Act.

The principle of the law is that the King is entirely different from all other married men, and that his position is a unique one. He is the only man in Great Britain who does not come under the scope of the Married Women's Property Act.

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NIGHT SCHOOL FOR HORSES.

TASK OF TRAINING THEM FOR THE TANK DRAMA.

Most of Them Don't Like to Jump Into the Water as They Are Required to Do and Have to Be Pushed In Until They Get Used to the Part They Have to Play.

Some nights until long after midnight, passersby in Forty-third street see the glow of lights in the Hippodrome Building and wonder what can be keeping people there so long after the performance has closed. If they listen closely they hear sharp commands and the pistol-shotlike cracking of a whip and the thunder of many hoofs pounding irregularly on the floor of the big stage. It is a rehearsal of the water horses.

Those who have been to a Hippodrome performance have known the long and graceful leap which the teams of Wilson's raiders take into the pool in the front stage. The horses take it, most of them, as though they liked the trick as much as a small boy likes the plunge into the swimming hole on a hot summer afternoon. But there are always two or three who buck and kick and hang back at the pool.

All these horses were trained at Park between Christmas and the opening night of the Hippodrome. At Luna Park they reached a condition of intense nervousness that they took it almost before the riders on their backs were ready. But when they were brought into the Hippodrome, and the glare of the footlights, the mystery of the great, murmuring house full of people complicated the aquatic feat, the horses all balked.

They would not go into that pool. Nothing would drive them to go in. And for three days before the Hippodrome opened there were horse rehearsals three or four times a day, until the brutes discovered that there was no more danger to them in the new building than there had been in the old one.

So a few days ago it was determined to break in the ten understudy water horses which could be substituted for the balkers and in case of any accident for the first team, which was disabled in the course of the performance. It is this training which has kept the back part of the Hippodrome building awake until all hours of the morning of late.

The horses selected for initiation as plungers are either thoroughbreds discarded from the race track for lack of speed or condemned cavalry mounts. The thoroughbred, cranky and touchy as he is, is found to be the horse which is quickest to learn the trick. If he balks as his trainer tells him no harm will come. That is the axiom which seems to have been ground into the thoroughbred's blood. "What the Man says is right, and he can never bring me to harm. It may be very disagreeable or very exciting, but it will come out all right."

The cavalry horse has learned the lesson by experience, even though it is not in his blood, and so he does very nearly as well as the thoroughbred when the test comes.

Dr. Potter, the Hippodrome's veterinary, has charge of the plunging lessons. He selects the horses and trains them for his work because they, and only they, he has the stage altogether free and need not look out for any heads or arms or legs and horse heads are not so numerous as human ones.

No spectators are allowed—at least, not if he knows it. He is assisted by the riders, one for each horse, and four or five stable-men, and the Hippodrome's first team sits up in her little emergency hospital across the street and waits until the rehearsal is over.

But there have been no accidents so far, except barked ships and bruised legs and shoulders and a bloody nose or so. Dr. Potter guarantees that if he has the back of the stage, in line A, a heavy pad is laid at the corner of the tank from which the horses are to plunge; this is to keep them from slipping in the water. The first team, after the rehearsal, is stepped out of the edge of the stage and went down. The next one whirled like a polo pony at the brink and bolted across to the Forty-fourth street side of the stage. He has to be brought up to the brink on the run three times before he could be induced to jump forward into the wavy, glittering mystery of the pool.

And so it went, each horse showing his distrust and fright in a new way, and finally, either because of the grades of the tank or the hoofs of his hind legs or because of an impetus he could not shake, tumbling overboard rather than leaping.

The second time the exhibition of horse ingenuity. The squid knew now what was expected of it. Each horse began trying a different way to defeat the demand. As a result, some were sideways and one or two had to be pushed in deliberately.

By the fifth or sixth trial that first night Dr. Potter was able to stand with his whip behind his back and send them over with only a yell of "Go!" to aid the firm hand and the urging bare heels of the boys who were on the horses.

The first week of the work is that each night the first plunge becomes a little less terrifying and the last plunge becomes a little more so. The horses learn to jump and to be regarded as quite commonplace incidents.

The horses learn that the more freely and willingly they jump out into the pool the less likely they are to be scolded. They learn to jump and to be regarded as quite commonplace incidents.

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Men's Unlaundered

Shirts at 68c.

A Macy specialty for 20 years. Made of Utiex Muslin, with fine linen bosom, hand-wrked buttonholes—made as good in every detail as a good shirt can be made. We have increased our manufacturing facilities, and are now able to maintain complete stocks—and to meet the demand.

AT 99c.—BUTTONED—BACK WAISTS, made of sheer white lawn, trimmed with three panels of embroidery and lace insertion; tucked back, deeply tucked cuffs and trimmed collar.

AT 1.49.—SIDE-PLEATED WAISTS, with hand-drawn work down fronts.

AT 1.98.—WHITE LAWN WAISTS, fronts of side pleats, trimmed with 5-inch English embroidery and hemstitching, tucked backs, deep embroidered cuffs.

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R. H. Macy & Co.'s Attractions Are Their Low Prices.

Macy's

B'way at 6th av. 34th to 35th St.

An Important Special Sale of Cut Glass, Fine China and Bric-a-Brac: Choicest Wares--Matchless Values.

ORGANIZED primarily as a June-Bride Sale of Cut Glass; then we determined to broaden it by offering, at ONE-FOURTH LESS THAN REGULAR, your choice of the superb wares that make up the displays in the White-and-Gold Art Room on the third floor.

The Cut Glass alone makes the sale one of commanding importance. It is "Straus" Cut Glass from our own cutting shops—the same grade of sparkling crystal that was awarded highest honors at the World's Fair. It must NOT be confused with the inferior ware now flooding the retail market—dull, lustreless Glass, produced to meet our low prices. In this connection it is well to remember that we NEVER SACRIFICE QUALITY for the sake of a low price.

In the White-and-Gold Room there is approximately \$50,000 worth of the finest China Porcelains, Art Wares and Bric-a-Brac procurable. It is manifestly impossible to re-mark this stock for this limited time sale, so we have adopted the plan of selling these splendid wares for three-fourths of the marked prices—a straight reduction of 25%.

The lines involved in this Art Room sale include:

"STRAUS" CUT GLASS, ROYAL BERLIN PORCELAINS—table service as well as ornamental pieces from the potteries founded by Frederick the Great; LIMOGES ENAMELS, ROYAL CROWN DERBY WARE, ROYAL COPENHAGEN WARE, JAPANESE CLOISONNE, CARVED IVORIES, VIENNA PORCELAIN PAINTINGS, CAPO DI MONTI, ITALIAN PLAQUES, COBRAL, GALLE NANCY and VENETIAN ART GLASS, the whole forming a collection not surpassed in any specialty store.

A June-Bride Sale—for a limited time; an opportunity to purchase gift wares of the very highest class at a saving of 25% on our regular low prices. In various lines of Cut Glass, offered on the main floor and in the basement the savings are greater than 25%—in some instances 40% and 50%.

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